

## SUPPORT BAHAI'S IN IRAN

HON. JOHN EDWARD PORTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 1995

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday September 20, I introduced the "Baha'i Resolution" which condemns Iran's ongoing repression of its Baha'i community. American Baha'is, who reside in every congressional district, are deeply concerned for the fate of more than 300,000 co-religionists in Iran. The survival of the Baha'i community is threatened by the regime's denial of legal recognition and the basic rights to organize, elect community leaders, educate their youth and conduct the normal activities of a law-abiding community.

Since 1982, the U.S. Congress has adopted six resolutions expressing its concern for Iran's religious persecution of Baha'is. There is good evidence that these congressional resolutions, together with appeals by other nations and the United Nations have helped to persuade Iranian officials to moderate their actions against Baha'is. During the 1980's, more than 200 Baha'is were executed and thousands imprisoned solely on the account of their religious beliefs.

While it is encouraging that the Iranian Government has not continued its barbarous policy of executing people simply for their religious beliefs, the ongoing repression of the Baha'i community continues and must be changed. Baha'is are currently being held under sentence of death merely because of their religious beliefs. It is imperative that we keep pressure on the Iranian officials until Baha'i community is no longer threatened by this repressive government.

The following honorable Members of Congress have already co-sponsored this legislation: LANTOS, SMITH, HOYER, HAMILTON, HYDE, OBESTAR, MEEK, WILLIAMS, GEJDENSON, SCHIFF, NEY, KLUG, DURBAN, MORELLA, ROYBAL-ALLARD, KILDER, MILLER, PELOSI, SPRATT, SLAUGHTER, BATEMAN, MCKINNEY, ENGEL, ABERCROMBIE, and BROWN. I am inserting into the record a copy of the resolution, and I urge my colleges to join me in support of this resolution.

H. CON. RES. 102

Whereas in 1982, 1984, 1988, 1990, 1992, and 1994 the Congress, by concurrent resolution, declared that it holds the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all its nationals, including members of the Baha'i Faith, Iran's largest religious minority;

Whereas the Congress has deplored the Government of Iran's religious persecution of the Baha'i community in such resolutions and in numerous other appeals, and has condemned Iran's execution of more than 200 Baha'is and the imprisonment of thousands of others solely on account of their religious beliefs;

Whereas the Government of Iran continues to deny individual Baha'is access to higher education and government employment and denies recognition and religious rights to the Baha'i community, according to the policy set forth in a confidential Iranian Government document which was revealed by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in 1993;

Whereas all Baha'i community properties in Iran have been confiscated by the government and Iranian Baha'is are not permitted to elect their leaders, organize as a commu-

nity, operate religious schools or conduct other religious community activities guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and

Whereas on February 22, 1993, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights published a formerly confidential Iranian Government document that constitutes a blueprint for the destruction of the Baha'i community and reveals that these repressive actions are the result of a deliberate policy designed and approved by the highest officials of the Government of Iran: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—*

(1) continues to hold the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all its nationals, including members of the Baha'i community, in a manner consistent with Iran's obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international agreements guaranteeing the civil and political rights of its citizens;

(2) condemns the repressive anti-Baha'i policies and actions of the Government of Iran, including the denial of legal recognition to the Baha'i community and the basic rights to organize, elect its leaders, educate its youth, and conduct the normal activities of a law-abiding religious community;

(3) expresses concern that individual Baha'is continue to suffer from severely repressive and discriminatory government actions, solely on account of their religion;

(4) urges the Government of Iran to extend to the Baha'i community the rights guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international covenants of human rights, including the freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, and equal protection of the law; and

(5) call upon the President to continue—  
(A) to assert the United States Government's concern regarding Iran's violations of the rights of its citizens, including members of the Baha'i community, along with expressions of its concern regarding the Iranian Government's support for international terrorism and its efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

(B) to emphasize that the United States regards the human rights practices of the Government of Iran, particularly its treatment of the Baha'i community and other religious minorities, as a significant factor in the development of the United States Government's relations with the Government of Iran;

(C) to urge the Government of Iran to emancipate the Baha'i community by granting those rights guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international covenants on human rights; and

(D) to encourage other governments to continue to appeal to the Government of Iran, and to cooperate with other governments and international organizations, including the United Nations and its agencies, in efforts to protect the religious rights of the Baha'is and other minorities through joint appeals to the Government of Iran and through other appropriate actions.

## A THOUGHTFUL PROPOSAL ON UNITED STATES RELATIONS WITH IRAN

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 1995

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, relations between the United States and Iran are and

have remained for the past 15 years at an all-time low. There are disturbing signs that Iran is seeking to develop a nuclear capacity, and clearly Iran has been an unstable influence throughout the Middle East and Central Asia. The United States has—wisely in my view—pursued a policy of seeking to isolate Iran and to limit economic, political, and diplomatic relations with the extremist Iranian Government. We have undertaken a major diplomatic effort to urge our allies in Western Europe and Japan to join us in economically isolating Iran in order to bring about democratic and rational change in Teheran.

Mr. Speaker, I have been among those who have called for strong sanctions against Iran. Earlier this year, I proposed, and my colleagues on the Committee on International relations accepted, my amendment to the American Overseas Interests Act which would impose tough sanctions, including reduction of foreign assistance, against Russia if that country goes ahead with reported plans to sell advanced nuclear technology to Iran. I have also supported legislation to impose tougher sanctions against Iran and restrict the ability of international oil corporations to deal with the Iranian companies and the Government of Iran.

The position I have taken on these issues involving Iran are taken because of my serious concern with the policies pursued by the Government of Iran, and not from any sense of irreconcilable problems with Iran. There are possibilities for change in Iran—for the evolution of government institutions that will allow the people of Iran to express their wishes through an open and free and democratic process and there are possibilities that will permit the people of Iran to enjoy the full spectrum of human and civil rights to which they are entitled. I would welcome the end of radical Islamic extremism in Iran and rejoice if we could witness the return to serious and responsible participation of Iran in the international community. The positions I have taken on U.S. policies toward Iran are motivated by that desire.

Mr. Speaker, last summer, the Washington Post, July 9, 1995, published an analysis and a thoughtful, but iconoclastic, proposal about the steps that might be taken by the United States in an effort to produce the domestic changes in Iran that will make it possible to bring an end to U.S.—Iranian hostility. I am not certain that this proposal will achieve its objectives, but it has been put forward by a gentleman whose experience, insight, and thoughtfulness I admire greatly. For this reason, Mr. Speaker, I ask that this article—"Beyond the Great Satan How the U.S. and Iran Can Mend Their Rift"—be placed in the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to give it careful and thoughtful consideration.

This excellent article was written by Mr. Hushang Ansary. Mr. Ansary has an extremely distinguished record in business, government service, and diplomacy. He is an international entrepreneur with business interests in the United States, Europe, and the Pacific rim. He worked his way through high school serving as a correspondent for the International News Service and the King Features Syndicate. He later earned a Ph.D. in Economics and International Relations from the University of Seoul, South Korea. After World War II, Mr. Ansary worked in Japan, initially as a business